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Loren B. Landau

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Changing Local Government Responses to Migration in South Africa

Veränderte Reaktionen von Kommunalverwaltungen auf Migration in Südafrika

With 2 Figures and 5 Tables

Constitutionally empowered to be a leading force for development, provincial and municipal authorities have been wary of addressing population movements or seeing them as fundamentally tied to socio-economic development. In many instances, authorities fear that developing pro-active, positive responses to migration would only encourage more of it. Whatever the reason, budgeting and planning exercises make little reference to extended population projections or other insights into the relationships among mobility, livelihoods, and community development. As the population continues to move, the shortcomings of these planning exercises and interventions have become increasingly evident in terms of limited access to critical services, physical and economic insecurity, marginalisation, and social conflict. This essay explains why and suggests means of addressing these challenges.

1. Introduction

South Africa's politics, economy, and society have been shaped by elaborate controls on human mobility and efforts to undermine them. With the country's first democratic elections in 1994, the country's once forbidden cities became primary destinations for migrants from around the country, across the continent, and beyond. Population movements – some predictable, some spontane-

ous; some voluntary, some forced – are now perennial features of South African cities, towns, and agricultural and mining communities (South African Cities Network 2004: 36; Balbo and Marconi 2005; Bekker 2002; Dorrington 2005).

Constitutionally empowered to be a leading force for development, provincial and municipal authorities have nevertheless been wary of addressing population movements or to link

Tab. 1 2009 survey sample breakdown by place of residence and migration history
Umfang der Befragung 2009 nach Wohnort der Migranten und Migrationsgeschichte

Residential site	Migration history		Sample	
			N	%
Alexandra	Born in South Africa	Long-term residents	385	38
		Internal migrants	326	32
	Foreign-born		277	28
	Unspecified		18	2
	Total		1006	100
Central Johannesburg	Born in South Africa	Long term residents	160	16
		Internal migrants	310	30
	Foreign-born		546	53
	Unspecified		6	1
	Total		1022	100
Total			2028	-

human mobility with. This reluctance partially stems from many policy makers' belief that immigration and migration are exclusively matters of national policy concern. Others unrealistically hope that mobility is merely a temporary outgrowth of the country's democratic transition. In many instances, authorities fear that developing pro-active, positive responses to migration will only encourage more of it. For these and other reasons, budgeting and planning exercises have been conducted with little reference to extended population projections or other insights into the relationships among mobility, livelihoods and community development. As the population continues to move, the shortcomings of these planning exercises and interventions have become increasingly evident in terms of limited access to critical services, physical and economic insecurity, marginalisation and social conflict. This article reviews these challenges and concludes with five recommendations for improving migration policy and management.

2. Data and Approach

In moving beyond the demographic and quantitative fixations characterising much of the migration and development literature, this study embeds demographic trends within broader socio-political and institutional configurations. In doing so, it draws on an ecumenical set of data to illustrate the intersections between human mobility and development in South Africa. This includes participant observation in national, local and regional migration-related discussions, original survey research, quantitative data analysis, and formal and informal interviews with migrants, service providers, advocates and local and national government representatives in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town and elsewhere. In all instances, it works from the position that social and political understandings of human mobility are as important as actual movements in determining development outcomes.

For its quantitative components, this paper relies on data provided by the national statistics agency

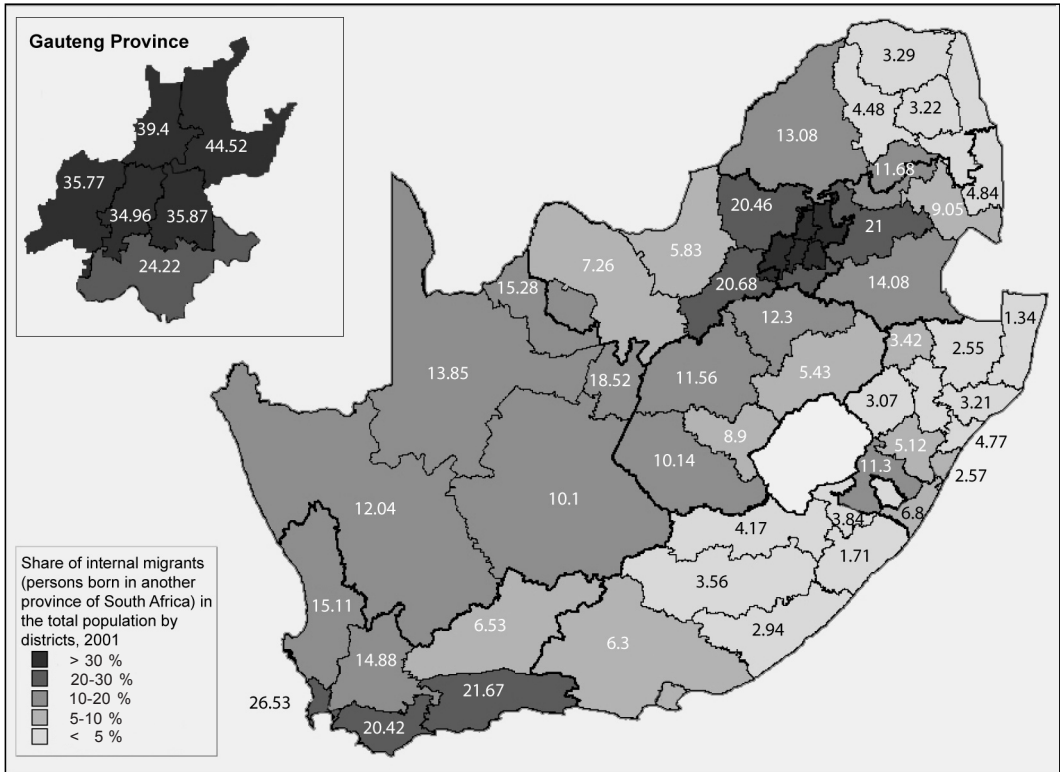


Fig. 2 Domestic migration in South Africa: Share of domestic migrants in the total population, by districts, 2001 (Source: Stats SA) / Binnenwanderung in Südafrika: Anteil der Binnenwanderer an der Gesamtbevölkerung in den Distrikten 2001

3. Demographic Overviews

In previous decades, much of South Africa's international migration concentrated in agricultural and mining areas. Similarly, until the late 1980s, urbanisation was strictly regulated although never absolutely controlled (see Posel 1997). Since the early 1990s, both international and domestic migrants are increasingly concentrated in the country's urban centres (see Figs. 1 and 2 and Tab. 2). In 2001, Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) estimated that 57.1 % of the population was urbanised. Based on population densities, this number could be recalculated to 68.5 % or higher. Accompanying the growth of South Africa's urban population, the

average household size has dropped from 4.5 in 1996 to 3.9 in 2001 (StatsSA Data). At current rates of population movements, these trends are likely to continue in the decades ahead.

As the figures and table above suggest, Gauteng Province is at the centre of both international and domestic migration. This is no surprise: while the smallest of South Africa's nine provinces in spatial terms (< 2 % of national landmass), it contributes close to 34 % of the country's gross domestic product and almost 10 % of sub-Saharan Africa's GDP. By far the most urbanised, it is also the most diverse and cosmopolitan province. In the 2007 Community Survey, 5.6 % of the province's

Tab. 2 Domestic migrants in South African provinces by province of origin in %, in the years 2001-2007
Binnenwanderer in die südafrikanischen Provinzen, nach Herkunftsprovinz in % (2001-2007)

Destination province	Share of migrants by province of origin (%)									All provinces of origin
	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP	
Western Cape (WC)	–	54	5	3	7	1	25	2	3	100 (N=197,212)
Eastern Cape (EC)	29	–	5	8	19	2	31	3	3	100 (N=85,392)
Northern Cape (NC)	20	6	–	10	3	43	17	1	1	100 (N=46,054)
Free State (FS)	6	18	10	–	8	14	34	4	4	100 (N=67,832)
KwaZulu-Natal (KZN)	6	45	2	4	–	3	29	8	3	100 (N=124,276)
Northwest (NW)	3	16	4	15	4	–	40	6	12	100 (N=152,933)
Gauteng (GP)	6	11	2	7	17	16	–	15	27	100 (N=609,169)
Mpumalanga (MP)	2	7	1	6	13	5	27	–	39	100 (N=128,903)
Limpopo (LP)	3	5	1	5	3	11	45	26	–	100 (N=71,269)

Source: Stats SA

population was born outside South Africa, almost double the national average. While international migrants are a significant presence, they are only about 15 % of the net migration of 418,000 between October 2001 and February 2007. Even within the province, non-nationals are concentrated in certain cities (7.9 % of Johannesburg is foreign-born) and particular neighbourhoods.

Even if international migration attracts the most attention and opprobrium, domestic mobility is far more significant in numeric terms. In the absence of a full review, I wish to draw attention to a number of critical points. First, research (e.g., South African Cities Network 2006: 16) clearly illustrates the spatial dynamics of migration to particular urban centres. In Metsweding, a smaller municipality in Gauteng Province, more than 10 % of the total population has re-

cently moved there. In Durban, the figure is less than 1 %. While discussions of urbanisation typically focus on primary cities, the fastest growing parts of Gauteng are not Johannesburg and Pretoria but rather smaller communities beyond the ‘urban edge’ (see Tab. 3). The most notable and controversial effect of this growth has been the expansion of poorly serviced informal settlements (i.e., shantytowns) ringing more established and well-serviced formal settlements.

As a result of these are internal movements, out-migration is also significantly shifting population profiles of a number of the country’s smaller and less prosperous communities. For example, Chris Hani municipality in the Eastern Cape has lost more than 8.5 % of its population over the past decade (South African Cities Network 2006: 18). Many of those who leave are young

Tab. 3 Migration figures for selected South African municipalities, 2006. Data source: Stats SA; reproduced from South African Cities Network 2006: 2.18; municipalities selected by South African Cities Network to illustrate national trends; they are not necessarily representative of all South African cities. / *Migration in ausgewählten städtischen Distrikten Südafrikas 2006. Datenquelle: Stats SA; übernommen aus South African Cities Network 2006: 2.18*

Municipality	In-migration as percentage of total population (2006)
Metsweding (Gauteng)	10.13
Overberg (KwaZulu-Natal)	8.18
Tshwane (Pretoria)	7.15
West Coast (Western Cape)	6.71
Ekurhuleni (Johannesburg Suburb)	5.88
West Rand (Johannesburg Suburb)	5.82
Johannesburg (Gauteng)	4.38
Cape Town (Western Cape)	4.38
eThekweni (KwaZulu-Natal)	0.92
Nelson Mandela (Eastern Cape)	0.63

men heading for the Western Cape, distorting population profiles (Dorrington 2005; Collinson et al. 2006). More than sheer numbers, these moves result in significant changes in skills level and social composition. In the Western Cape, the arrival of people from the Eastern Cape, traditionally an ANC stronghold, is not only transforming the province's racial composition, but also challenges the province's ruling party, the Democratic Alliance. In Gauteng, the enormous diversity fostered by migration has proven to be a politically exploitable resource in the past, particularly during the violence preceding the 1994 general elections and again in the May 2008 'xenophobic' attacks (which targeted both foreign and South African migrants). As South African politics again become more competitive, there are hints that ethnicity may re-emerge as a dangerous political divide.

South Africa is also seeing a great diversification in its population's migration trajectories. Whereas Apartheid-era South African migration policy promoted permanent White immigration and temporary Black migration, the post-apartheid period is characterised by a mix of circular, permanent and transit migration. Indeed, such impermanence is encouraged by the current policy frameworks, the difficulties migrants have in accessing secure accommodation and the rapid rate of deportations.

The tendency towards transit is particularly visible in smaller towns where people first come after leaving 'rural' or formal homeland areas (i.e., former 'native reserves'). Such smaller towns are often unable to retain more ambitious people who may quickly move on to larger cities or to smaller towns on the edge of larger cities. Coupled with these moves towards the large-

Tab. 4 Presumed future place of residence of migrants in the inner city of Johannesburg (Source: Wits University, 2006 African cities survey) / *Vermuteter künftiger Wohnort von Migranten in der Innenstadt von Johannesburg*

Where respondent expects to live in two years	Place of birth (%)			
	DRC	Somalia	Mozambique	South Africa outside Johannesburg
South Africa	44	68	60	81
Country of origin	13	8	20	
Third country	30	11	4	5
Don't know	13	12	15	13
Total	100	100	100	100

er urban centres are frequent returns to sending areas for a variety of reasons discussed below.

Some of these trends are illustrated by ACMS research: In the 2006 Wits University survey in Johannesburg, 59 % of migrants considered Johannesburg as their final destination. This proportion is higher for Mozambicans (78 %) and for the internal migrants (84 %). In many regards, the migrants born in Mozambique have the same migratory behaviour as the internal migrants in South Africa. When the Mozambicans had considered other destinations, it was essentially Swaziland or a European country. South Africans who migrated to Johannesburg also regularly considered other destinations in South Africa, and many people had, in fact, lived elsewhere before coming to Johannesburg. *Table 4* captures some of these dynamics.

Linked to these trajectories and other factors, people regularly move within South Africa as well as into and out of it. According to the 2007 Community Survey, 18 % of Gauteng's inhabitants had moved within the Province since 2001. According to ACMS data for the inner city of Johannesburg, the South African born population has, on average, moved twice since coming to the city. In

most instances that means moving twice within ten years. For foreigners, who have typically lived in the city for shorter periods, the average number of moves is slightly above three times.

There is no easy way to summarise population dynamics apart from saying that (a) we know too little about them, and (b) there is no single pattern of movement. As elsewhere in the world, South African movements into and through cities are driven by the desire for passage, profit and protection. These dynamics are then shaped by the country's relatively unique socio-spatial history that has left populations tightly clustered in economically unviable 'rural' locales and peri-urban townships. As the following section suggests, the consequences of these dynamics are being shaped (or at least influenced) by current policy frameworks and more or less ineffective responses from national and local authorities.

4. Policy Frameworks and Policy Responses¹

Local government is one of three spheres of government defined by the South African Con-

stitution (the others being provincial and national). As currently conceived, South Africa is somewhere between a centralised and a federal state. While local government's relatively independent status is protected by the Constitution, it is practically curtailed by financial and human resource constraints and the domination of local government by the highly centralised African National Congress. Nonetheless, the Constitution provides clear definitions of municipalities' roles and responsibilities including legislative and executive authority over a number of matters. By and large, municipalities are required to concentrate on areas such as: water and sanitation; waste removal; fire fighting services; and municipal planning. As such, many of the social and economic concerns associated with movement are not explicitly within local government's mandate. The primary needs of migrants – shelter, access to health care, access to education, access to economic opportunities – are largely the responsibility of national or provincial governments. That said, under Section 153 (a) of the Constitution, local municipalities have a responsibility to, 'structure and manage its administration and budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community, and to promote the social and economic development of the community'. Section 152 (1) further defines this 'developmental duty' by saying that local government has various objects or purposes. These include 'to promote social and economic development', 'to promote a safe and healthy environment', and other responsibilities that clearly suggest some responsibility towards human mobility however ill-defined.

In response, most of South Africa's municipalities now accept that new arrivals are part of their populations and that they will have to address migration. Part of the shift in policy comes from the slow recognition among *some* officials in local government that without apartheid-style measures to control movements – measures that for reasons of intention and in-

capacity never achieved 100 % effectiveness – cities can do little to alter regional migration dynamics (*Kok and Collinson 2006; Johannesburg Strategic Development Strategy 2006*).

However, this recognition comes with considerable trepidation and most municipalities (both urban and rural) have thus far failed to develop empirically informed and proactive policy responses to human mobility. Although there are slow changes, many officials continue to react to the presence of new arrivals by implicitly denying their presence, excluding them from developmental plans, or allowing various forms of official and non-official discrimination. Across South Africa, international and domestic migrants continue to be seen largely as a drain on public resources (see *Bekker 2002*) rather than as potential resources or, more neutrally, as the people government is dedicated to serve. Even those wishing to more proactively absorb new, often poor and vulnerable populations, face considerable challenges in determining how to do so. I will speak about these obstacles momentarily. Before doing so, I wish to briefly outline a number of the potential impacts of mobility as currently managed.

5. The Developmental Consequences of Human Mobility

There is little systematic, nationally representative data that outlines migration's spatialised developmental effects. However, a review of data from the ACMS' Johannesburg-based work points to a number of critical – and largely negative – effects that have resulted from poor planning, lack of resources, and overt discrimination. These are most evident in the area of housing (or human settlements in the current official lexicon), employment and access to social services.

The remainder of this section briefly outlines some of the aforementioned challenges for the

newly urbanised. (These data do not tell us the effects of migration on sending communities.) What we do know is that migrant labour in South Africa continues to be a critical livelihood support for many South African households. In the 2006 Johannesburg survey, close to half (47.9 %) of the South Africans interviewed reported regularly sending money to someone outside of Johannesburg, most commonly to parents (60.7 %) or other close relatives. Of those sending resources, 59.3 % say they send on a monthly basis with another 22 % reporting sending money home three to four times a year. The amount of resources sent from the townships and peri-urban settlements is probably considerably less given that those living in the inner city are relatively prosperous. Even so, indications are that it remains a central livelihood strategy (Vearey et al. 2008). Indeed, when families invest in sending someone to a city for education or to look for a work, the migrant is likely to remain a critical resource for households in non-urban areas. While rural-to-urban transfers are not a primary source of support as they are elsewhere on the continent, urban-to-urban transfers appear to be of growing importance (Vearey et al. 2008).

The 2009 ACMS study in Johannesburg's Alexandra Township and inner city identifies a number of forms of vulnerability associated with residents in those areas. All of these areas are primary destinations for people arriving from outside the city although the types of people who settle in the two areas are starkly different. Given the expense of housing in the inner city, the migrants who end up there tend to be from stronger educational backgrounds and have some prior urban experience. The main forms of vulnerability include risks of unemployment, poor access to services and capital, and insecurity due to collective violence, criminality and harassment by state representatives. These are experienced differently from one area to another, as shown by significant differ-

ences between Alexandra and the inner city and among different population groups (in this case among the long term South African residents, internal migrants and the foreign-born).

However, a number of critical factors affect populations across nationality and locale. These include, *inter alia*, i) poor education and health status that translates into low income earning potential; ii) inadequate documentation that hinders access to employment and services, iii) discrimination and victimisation linked to place of birth, iv) sex, with women being more vulnerable than men, and v) place of residence: while migrants in Alexandra are more exposed to risks of unemployment and public violence, there is considerable variation even within Alexandra.

There are at least three areas that warrant further exploration: accommodation, employment and access to essential social services.

5.1 Accommodation

Providing access to dignified and healthy housing is a key policy challenge for South Africa in relation to all its residents. However, South Africa's housing policy has severely disadvantaged both non-citizens (who are comprehensively excluded from subsidised housing programmes for low-income groups) and South African migrants. Although there are mechanisms such as the National Housing Subsidy Scheme, the National Housing Programme for the Upgrading of Informal Settlements, the Emergency Housing Programme and subsidised rental in council properties, these provisions have proved patently unable to support recent arrivals (see Greenburg and Polzer 2008).

Perhaps the greatest challenge to migrants accessing housing is the way in which the government has conceptualised public housing provision. For a variety of reasons too complex to

describe here, South Africa settled on a public housing model that, in most cases, intends to provide free-standing housing to those falling below certain income levels. The ownership of a house is then transferred to the tenant so that he/she can use it as an asset to secure a loan or 'trade-up' into a better housing situation. Such an approach has fallen short for a number of reasons. Although the government has (by its own estimation) provided well over a million housing units in the past decade, these do not come close to meeting the demand. Part of the problem has been that these houses have been built on available land near people's current residences. This (a) excludes people who wish to leave economically unproductive areas and helps to reinforce apartheid-era spatial divisions; and (b) means that

when new houses are built in urban areas, they are often far from where people could potentially work. Indeed, as a fixed asset they do not allow the kind of flexibility often required for people who change jobs frequently. Moreover, while people technically own the property, there is a formal prohibition on selling it for five years after it has been received. As such, the government has effectively killed the entry-level housing market and disabled the poor's ability to 'trade-up'.

Beyond the technicalities described above, the types of housing provided are ill-suited to a newly urbanised population. In most instances they are available only to married couples or to single people (usually women) with children. Given that many of the migrants reach-

Tab. 5 Housing condition by place of living and migration history (Source: author's survey 2009)
Wohnverhältnisse nach Wohnort und Migrationshintergrund

			Lives in a multi-family apartment, a backyard, a domestic worker’s quarter, a hostel, a self-built house, a shelter (%)	Access to electricity in the current dwelling (%)	Access to water inside the current dwelling (%)
Place of living and migration history	Alexandra	Long-term residents	80	71	14
		Internal migrants	83	65	14
		Foreign-born	91	45	7
	Johannesburg inner-city	Long-term resident	30	96	93
		Internal migrants	37	97	96
		Foreign-born	55	98	97
Country of birth		South Africa	63	80	46
		Zimbabwe	66	89	75
		Mozambique	89	36	13
		DRC	44	100	100
		Malawi	66	73	71

ing cities are neither married nor actively caring for children, they have been essentially excluded from this benefit. Moreover, as many of the newly urbanised do not see the city as a final destination, the last thing they want is to invest their resources in a permanent home. However, given the stigma associated with 'hostels' (large structures intended to occupy migrant labour), the government has been reluctant to consider large-scale temporary or transitional housing options.

Due to these exclusions and a general shortage of public housing, ACMS research in urban areas suggests that 70 % of urban migrants live in privately rented inner-city flats, of which 36 % are main tenants and 64 % are in sub-tenancy arrangements (*Greenburg and Polzer* 2008; also *Peberdy and Majodina* 2000). Housing insecurity is most strikingly illustrated by migrants' experience of overcrowding through sub-tenancy. Of survey respondents, 40 % stated this as their main housing concern. Overcrowding impacts negatively on both physical and mental health, on the ability to build a sustainable livelihood, and on child development. Since overcrowding also contributes to the degeneration of buildings and urban infrastructure, it is in the interest of metropolitan councils to reduce housing insecurity. Using data collected during the ACMS 2009 survey, *Table 5* provides a breakdown of the type of housing where people live. It is also important to keep in mind that South African cities rarely provide a housing 'ladder'. Such a ladder would offer accommodation at various prices in various places in ways that would allow people to climb towards ownership should they so desire. As such, even those who are able to establish a toe-hold in the city can rarely trade up. Without well-paid and regular jobs, it is almost impossible to get the housing credit needed to span the significant price gap between an entry-level or government-provided dwelling and a fully serviced house or flat.

5.2 Labour market

Ready access to informal and formal markets for exchanging goods and services is critical to successful urban economies. Unfortunately, migrants who have recently arrived in South African cities are often systematically excluded from employment and income-generating opportunities through both formal and informal mechanisms. Foreign citizens without the right to work – but with the skills and a willingness to do so – often accept positions where they are paid below the minimum wage or work in undignified conditions. Even those with employment rights report being turned away by employers who do not recognise their papers or their professional qualifications. Without money to have their qualifications recognised by the South African Qualifications Agency (SAQA), they have little choice but to seek other ways to generate income. A recent court decision now allows undocumented migrants to seek recourse for labour abuses through the Labour Court and other arbitration mechanisms. However, it is unclear whether this will have any substantive impact on improving labour conditions.

Despite the obstacles facing international migrants, South African migrants often face much greater obstacles in finding employment. Those coming from poor rural areas are particularly ill-equipped to participate in the urban labour market. Consequently, new arrivals tend to be among the poorest and least employed. While they may be able to rely on social grants or other forms of social protection, they often struggle to earn the income needed to move out of abject poverty (see *Cross et al.* 2005). They also face a series of obstacles related to informal trading that effectively blocks people trying to enter in the lower end of the business sector. These include by-laws that require business licenses or prohibit the kind of trades available to the poor. Although poorly understood, there also appear to be severe social sanctions on

newcomers establishing businesses in townships or peri-urban settlements. With significant numbers of South Africans likely to remain 'structurally unemployed' – unlikely to find formal jobs in their lifetimes – having little access to these sort of small business options can be economically devastating.

5.3 Social services

A cocktail of undercapacity, inadequate documentation, poor record keeping and outright discrimination prevents many migrants – non-nationals and South Africans – from accessing critical social services. This is most visible in terms of accessing health care. The inability or unwillingness of many hospital staff members to distinguish between different classes of migrants (coupled with xenophobia) often means that migrants, including refugees, are denied access to basic and emergency health services or are charged inappropriate fees. Many non-nationals report not being able to access Anti-Retroviral Treatment, for example, because they do not have green, bar-coded ID documents. Non-nationals may not only be refused services outright, but foreigners report being made to wait longer than South Africans before being seen and are subject to other forms of discrimination. There are also accounts indicating that non-nationals are often denied full courses of prescribed medicines (see *Nkosi 2004; Pursell 2005*).

While one might expect foreigners to face difficulty in accessing health care, there are also significant challenges for newly urbanised South Africans. Many people's struggles to access adequate care in rural or sending areas are replicated in urban centres. While urban residents are often better to access emergency care, regular, primary care – including HIV testing and anti-retroviral therapy – remains elusive. Some small part of this has to do with individuals' health-seeking behaviour: People from rural areas may

mistrust the kind of 'western' medicine available in the cities. As *Vearey et al. (2008)* demonstrate, there are also other significant problems with the availability of health services and medicines in the informal settlements and communities that absorb new migrants. If people are working, they may simply not have the time to travel to more distant clinics. Although the South African Government is working to improve its record systems, many urban migrants must still return to their 'home' clinics because that is where their records are kept. Even if it were possible to move records to an urban clinic, many migrants' transience necessitates a system that allows people to access health care at multiple points.

6. Challenges in Addressing Migration and Urbanisation

Recognising the importance of human mobility to human and economic development does not necessarily mean that officials have the information or tools to do this effectively. Perhaps the most fundamental challenge to local governments charged with addressing migration and other development challenges is **how little local officials know about the people living in their communities**. Whereas national governments have the relative luxury of developing generalised policy frameworks, local governments and service providers are responsible for more focused and context-specific interventions. In almost no instances are municipalities able to draw on a nuanced and dynamic understanding of their constituencies. This is generally true regarding the urban poor and all the more so with geographically mobile people. Efforts to map 'poverty pockets' (*Cross et al. 2005*) and review both national and localised migration data (*Dorrington 2005, Bekker 2002, Kok and Collinson 2006, South African Cities Network 2006, Landau and Gindrey 2008*) represent some of the first concerted effort to understand South Africa's urban population dynam-

ics. However, many of these studies are based on admittedly incomplete census data – particularly inaccurate regarding foreign-born populations – and are often purely descriptive. While the Department of Cooperative Government and Traditional Authorities (effectively the Ministry of Local Government) now recognises that there is a need for improving cross-border and multi-nodal planning – including a greater consideration of population mobility – planners are effectively unable to understand the ‘functional economic geography of the city and its region [and] how the different components relate to each other’ (South African Cities Network 2006: Section 2-7). In this context, local planners continue to be influenced by stereotypes and misreading or incomplete readings of data.

The inability to effectively understand and predict urban populations poses significant risks to local governments’ ability to meet their obligations and developmental objectives. Perhaps most obviously, the invisibility of large segments of the urban population can result in much greater demand for services than predicted, reducing service quality and outstripping budgetary allocations. In many instances, these are hidden costs – to public and private infrastructure, water, and other services that are not accessed individually. Higher populations do not, however, necessarily result in higher costs to local government in receiving areas. Because many of South Africa’s internal migrants are young men, they may remain relatively healthy, autonomous and productive in urban areas – and hence levy few costs. Moreover, while they may not invest in property, much of their consumption – of food and consumer goods – is in urban areas. In such instances, sending communities may lose the benefits of their labour while being saddled with the costs of educating their children and providing for them in their old age. Many of these costs are paid centrally or via the provinces, but others are the responsibility of local government.

While both sending and receiving communities are influenced by the significant costs and benefits associated with migration, **population dynamics rarely figure in the distribution of national resources by the South African Treasury.** Since the promulgation of the new constitution in 1996, the Treasury has distributed money to the provinces (and subsequently to the metros) based almost exclusively on current population estimates. Such practices are problematic for at least three reasons. First, the population estimates often significantly misrepresent where people actually live. Someone may own a house and vote in a rural community but live elsewhere for eleven months of the year (Department of Housing 2006). Second, people’s presence in a particular locality is not necessarily a good predictor of their costs to local or provincial government. Third, infrastructure and social service planning requires long-term investments based on predictions of population in five to fifteen years time. Without reliable estimates, cities are unable to prepare for their population’s future needs. In late September 2006, the South African Fiscal Commission convened a seminar to try to come to grips with these issues in order to better advise the treasury on resource distribution. In 2008, the Treasury again met – with World Bank support – to discuss resource allocation. However, planning continues to be based on current rather than projected population distributions and all but ignores undocumented migrants. Perhaps most worrying is that many planners remain unaware of such an approach’s frailty in a country with such high rates of mobility. This is likely to become particularly problematic as South Africa begins implementing its national spatial development framework.

The lack of coordination among government departments and agencies further exaggerates the partial and often ill-informed responses to human mobility. In discussions with planners, they repeatedly expressed frustration regarding their efforts to foster collab-

oration within local government departments and, more importantly, between local government and South Africa's other two governmental 'spheres' (provincial and national). However, due to migration's spatial dynamics, effectively responding to human mobility is not something that any single governmental body or sphere can singly address as it requires coordination and planning that transcends the boundaries of metropolitan areas and encompasses a wider area connected by commuter flows, economic linkages and shared facilities.

The paucity of collaboration is visible in a variety of potentially critical areas. Perhaps most obviously, the Department of Home Affairs (DHA – responsible for immigration and domestic population registries) has been either reluctant or unable to share its data with city planners. These not only include the number of foreigners legally entering the country, but registered moves, deaths and births. The most probable cause is lack of capacity within the DHA, although there is undoubtedly also a general reluctance to freely share information. It is, of course, not only the DHA that has shown a reluctance to work with local government, but the lack of coordination between DHA and local government is probably the most significant gap.

We must also recognise that were city planners keen to promote the benefits of migration and had the knowledge and support to do so, they are still left with **a population that may not identify with the cities in which they live**. As suggested earlier, many who come to the city do not expect to stay there for long. According to Statistics South Africa, "the temporary nature of rural-to-urban migration in South Africa may add insight into the persistence of overcrowding and poor living conditions in urban townships. Migrants may employ a calculated strategy to maximise the benefits to their household of origin, rather than for their own benefit or the benefit of residential units in the

urban setting" (in Johannesburg Development Strategy 2006: 28). Critically, journeys home or onwards often remain practically elusive for reasons of money, safety or social status. This leaves large sections of the population working in the city, but not wishing to take root or invest in it. We also see evidence of this extra-local orientation in the levels of remittances being sent out of the city to both rural communities and other countries.

Although it is almost impossible to quantify the consequences of a city filled with those who identify with sites elsewhere, hints appear in the type of social and material investments people are willing to make in the city, including the type of housing or services for which they are willing to pay. It also raises important governance challenges: If people do not see their future in their existing neighbourhood or urban community, they are less likely to become politically engaged or to voice their opinions about what must be done. Without this feedback, government planning is unlikely to succeed. The cities' fragmentation and fluidity also raise concerns around the kind of social capital needed to promote small business, offer a social safety net and combat crime and violence.

In considering the challenges facing local government and the possibility for positive policy reform, we must note that the **current policy climate is not conducive to developing pro-migrant responses**. As suggested elsewhere, the South African Department of Home Affairs has shown little ability in developing and implementing a sound and effective immigration policy. Elsewhere in government, there has been little planning or consideration of human mobility and there appears to be a growing sense that migration remains a social dysfunction that should be countered wherever possible. The current administration's pro-rural agenda appears to be as much about providing basic services for the poor – and maintaining a rural political constit-

uency – as about halting movement to the country's towns and cities. As such, there is little reason to believe that South Africa will independently shift its approach to one that accepts human mobility as a natural and potentially productive part of the development process.

Lastly, we must recognise that **public policy and government interventions are often only loosely connected with substantive change in citizens' lives.** As a result of their history of struggle and resistance, South African cities are effectively governed by a blend of informal and formal authority structures often linked to political parties or other more localised political entities. Activated at different levels at different times, these structures determine – albeit inconsistently – the right to live in the city, the potential success of formal institutional reform and the economic and physical security of those living in a cluster of shacks or a given street. This system of heterogeneous rule is enabled by the lack of trusted, legitimate central leadership. In its absence, self-appointed structures almost completely appropriated the authority constitutionally mandated to local government structures, operating as an 'untouchable' parallel leadership in collaboration with the police and elected leaders or against them (see *Misago et al. 2009; Landau and Monson 2008; Palmary et al. 2003*).

In many instances, community leadership is an attractive alternative for the largely unemployed residents of the informal settlements. It is a form of paid employment or an income-generating activity where supposedly voluntary leaders often charge for services, levy protection fees, sell or let land and buildings and take bribes in exchange for solving problems or influencing tender processes. The profitability of community leadership positions has attracted considerable infighting and competition for power and legitimacy among different groups present in affected areas. Indeed, street committees, Community Policing Forums (CPFs)

and South African National Civics Organisation (SANCO) in most areas report involvement in solving all sorts of problems community members bring to them. For example, in Madelakufa II (a part of Alexandra Township in Johannesburg) respondents report that the CPF, whose mandate is – according to the local CPF leaders – 'exclusively fighting crime', also involves itself in solving socio-economic and service delivery issues. In Du Noon, in the Western Cape, the local SANCO, which the other local leaders call a 'family business', constantly battles the ward council when negotiating development projects with donors. Any reform initiative, whatever the goal, must negotiate the varied and often difficult terrain.

7. Recommendation for Reform and Support

There is little definite or conclusive to say about migration and development in South Africa other than that the dynamics are complex, highly spatialised and prone to rapid shifts in both nature and effects. In such a context, a document like this can only raise issues that will – or should – shape population and political dynamics and responses to them. To that end, there is a need to rethink three divisions: between documented and undocumented migrants; between voluntary and forced migrants; and between international and domestic migration. This has tended to produce policy silos with little coordination among agencies charged with law enforcement, status determination, documentation, social assistance or local development. In almost no instances do such firm distinctions make logical sense. This is all the more so in South Africa where there are mixed migration flows and few bureaucratic mechanisms to distinguish among the various migrant categories. If there is to be substantive and effective reform in any one of these areas – asylum, migration, border management or urban development – all

must be considered together as part of a national framework to address human mobility. As Swaziland, Lesotho and parts of Zimbabwe are effectively part of South Africa as far as migrant systems are concerns, these discussions must explicitly consider regional dimensions.

There is also a need to introduce a spatial component in considering future policy directions. Perhaps more than many policy areas, national governments are automatically assigned comprehensive responsibility for matters affecting immigration, emigration and broader urban and rural development frameworks. While national government has an important role, there is a need to enhance the role of local authorities in such planning initiatives. As migration's most immediate effects are felt locally in both sending and receiving communities, municipalities must be involved to ensure that these effects are developmentally positive. Moreover, because migration involves at least two distinct geographic locales, the developmental effects are, by definition, multi-sited. As such, both analysis and policy debates must work towards a multi-sited approach. Any discussion of migration and development should hereafter consider local, sub-national, national and – indeed – regional impacts and policy options.

There will also be benefits from situating global debates over migration within broader discussions over governance and development. If nothing else, this report suggests that foreign assistance and domestic policy reforms push for 'migration mainstreaming' into all aspects of governance. In a country where international and domestic mobility remains so demographically and politically important, the success of any development initiative must overtly consider the country's population dynamics. As part of this process, the government should identify and understand the root causes of the negative by-products of human mobility – corruption, human rights abuses, labour competi-

tion – and begin developing ways to help reduce them rather than rely on the fantasy that it should and can totally control mobility itself.

In terms of more concrete and immediate interventions, donor and local support could usefully be dedicated to the following concerns:

- **Finding ways of building a 'housing ladder' and housing types that are appropriate to mobile populations:** This will enable housing policy to serve as a gateway to the city – allowing those who wish to transit to do so without extraordinary investment and to allow those who wish to stay to gradually improve their housing situation.
- **Shifting time frames for service delivery analysis and planning. Local authorities are often under pressure to provide quick fixes to their population's acute needs:** While such needs cannot be ignored, such an approach all but guarantees (a) that the needs of future residents will not be considered or planned for; and (b) that local authorities will continue to feel threatened by the continued arrival and transit of people through their communities.
- **Facilitate debates around the nature of citizenship, social investment and participatory politics in areas with mobile or transient populations:** Current community engagement tools often exclude those who are new arrivals or do not see their futures tied to the city. This can only result in poor planning and social fragmentation. Addressing this means rethinking modes of engaging with such populations and to promote local commitments without undermining their aspirations for onward (or return) movement and responsibilities to support those living elsewhere.
- **Develop service delivery mechanisms that consider mobile populations:** The inability

ty of people to access health care records in multiple sites is a fundamental obstacle to accessing health care. Similarly, accessing education, housing, and other services and grants is often difficult for those who move. A review of how records are managed could help address these concerns.

- **Reconsider budgeting and planning frameworks:** To encourage planning for mobile population, both sending and receiving communities need to be supported in seeking to address the needs of migrants and their families. This will require (a) allocating resources in ways that consider population trajectories and (b) developing mechanism that can coordinate services in areas where people commute or move across municipal boundaries.
- **Incorporate smaller towns and sending communities in discussions around mobility and development:** To date, the country's largest communities have begun recognising that mobility is affecting their development trajectories. However, these are not the only communities affected by migration. As such, any approach to understanding migration and local governance must also consider peri-urban and small towns.

Lastly, any effort to incorporate migration into a long-term policy and governance process will require better data and integration of data into planning processes. **Enhanced data collection must not only focus on the number of people moving, but on people's aspirations and the formal and informal obstacles they face, resources they have available and strategies they adopt.** This will become particularly important as South Africa actively implements its spatial development model. While it is useful to develop aggregated trends, reactions and attitudes may be shaped by the particular racial, economic and political history of a single

neighbourhood. All this will require heightening capacity for statistical, institutional and social analyses. While this is critical at the national level, all spheres of government should be encouraged to collaborate and develop the capacity for data collection and analysis at all levels. Lastly, mechanisms should be created to ensure that these analyses – if they eventually become available – are fed into decision-making processes. Doing otherwise will ensure policy failure and may help realise many planners' current fears about the effects of human mobility on prosperity, security and development.

Note

¹ The introductory paragraphs of this section draw heavily from *Götz and Landau* 2004 and *Götz* 2004.

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Summary: Changing Local Government Responses to Migration in South Africa

Constitutionally empowered to be a leading force for development, provincial and municipal authorities have been wary of addressing population movements or seeing them as fundamentally tied to socio-economic development. In many instances, authorities fear that developing pro-active, positive responses to migration would only encourage more of it. Whatever the reason, budgeting and planning exercises make little reference to extended population projections or other insights into the relationships among mobility, livelihoods and community development. As the population continues to move, the shortcomings of these planning exercises and interventions have become increasingly evident in terms of limited access to critical services, physical and economic insecurity, marginalisation and social conflict. After reviewing migration dynamics and challenges in South Africa, this short essay makes five recommendations for improving migration policy and management: 1) Reconsider the analytic and bureaucratic divisions between documented and undocumented migrants; between voluntary and forced migrants; and between international and domestic migration; 2) Analytically respatialise planning and management scenarios. While recognising national government's important role, there is a need to enhance the role of local governments – working together and with districts, provinces, and national bodies – in evaluating, designing and implementing an approach to human mobility; 3) Situate migration and its management within global debates over governance and development. As of yet, few international actors (let alone the South African government), have applied lessons learned from broader governance approaches to migration. Such an approach would include 'migration mainstreaming' into all aspects of governance; 4) Fundamentally reconsider how resources are allocated to municipalities as local authorities often lack the resources needed for populations that are likely to arrive in the future or for those temporarily residing within their municipalities. Moreover, current budgeting models rarely support translocal coordination in support of populations who move across municipal or provincial boundaries; 5) Incorporating migration into long-term policy and governance systems will require better data and integration of data into planning processes. Without the ability to describe

human mobility and evaluate policies' current and potential impacts, interventions may fail in ways that realise planners' current fears about human mobility's effects on prosperity, security and development.

Zusammenfassung: Veränderte Reaktionen von Kommunalverwaltungen auf Migration in Südafrika

Obwohl verfassungsgemäß als wesentliche Akteure für regionale Entwicklung bestimmt, haben die Provinz- und Kommunalbehörden Bevölkerungswanderungen bisher nur zurückhaltend thematisiert und kaum in Verbindung zur sozioökonomischen Entwicklung gebracht. In vielen Fällen fürchten die Behörden, dass ein positiver, proaktiver Umgang mit Migration diese nur fördert. Aus welchem Grund auch immer beziehen sich Haushalts- und Planungsüberlegungen wenig auf ausführlichere Bevölkerungsprognosen oder andere Erkenntnisse über die Zusammenhänge zwischen Mobilität, Lebensunterhaltssicherung und kommunaler Entwicklung. Während Migrationsprozesse andauern, werden die Mängel dieser Planungen und Maßnahmen immer deutlicher, in Form von begrenztem Zugang zu wichtigen Dienstleistungen, physischer und ökonomischer Unsicherheit, Marginalisierung sowie sozialen Konflikten. Nach der Darstellung der Migrationsdynamik in Südafrika und der sich aus ihr ergebenden Herausforderungen macht dieser Beitrag fünf Empfehlungen für Verbesserungen bei Migrationspolitik und -praxis: 1) eine Neubewertung der analytischen und verwaltungsmäßigen Trennung zwischen Migranten mit und ohne Dokumenten, zwischen freiwilligen und Zwangsmigranten; und zwischen internationaler und Binnenmigration; 2) die teilräumliche Umsetzung von Planungs- und Management-Szenarios. Während die Bedeutung der nationalen Regierung weitgehend anerkannt wird, sollte auch die lokale Verwaltungsebene – in Zusammenarbeit, auch mit Distrikten, Provinzen und nationalen Instanzen – stärker in die Bewertung, Gestaltung und Implementierung des Umgangs mit der Mobilität der Menschen einbezogen werden; 3) eine Berücksichtigung von Migration und Migrationsmanagement in globalen Debatten über Steuerung und Entwicklung. Bis heute haben nur wenige internationale Akteure (und die südafrikanische Regierung überhaupt nicht) Erkenntnisse aus der allge-

meinen Governance-Diskussion auf Migration angewandt. Ein solcher Ansatz würde „Migrations-Mainstreaming“ in alle Aspekte der Governance einbinden; 4) ein Überdenken der Ressourcenverteilung an die Kommunen, da lokalen Behörden oft die Ressourcen fehlen, die für künftig erwartete Zuwanderer oder für zeitweilig anwesende Wohnbevölkerung gebraucht werden. Außerdem fördern gegenwärtig angewandte Haushaltsmodelle selten eine überörtliche Koordinierung der Unterstützung von Zuwanderern, die sich über kommunale bzw. provinzielle Grenzen hinweg bewegen; 5) die Einbeziehung von Migration in langfristige Politik und Governance-Prozesse; diese erfordert bessere Daten und die bessere Integration von Daten in Planungsprozesse. Ohne die Möglichkeit, die Mobilität der Menschen zu beschreiben und die aktuellen und potentiellen Auswirkungen der Migrationspolitik zu bewerten, können Interventionen in einer Weise scheitern, die die Ängste von Planern in Bezug auf die Effekte von Mobilität auf Wohlstand, Sicherheit und Entwicklung bestätigen.

Des réactions changées des gouvernements locaux à la migration en Afrique du Sud

Bien que constitutionnellement habilitées à jouer un rôle moteur pour le développement, les autorités provinciales et municipales hésitent à prendre en considération les mouvements de population ou à les envisager sous l'angle du développement socio-économique. Dans de nombreux cas, les autorités craignent qu'une politique migratoire proactive ne fasse qu'encourager davantage de migration. Quelles que soient les raisons, les exercices budgétaires et de planification n'intègrent guère les projections relatives à l'accroissement de la population ou d'autres aspects des relations entre la mobilité, les moyens de subsistance et le développement communautaire. Alors que la population continue à se déplacer, les lacunes de ces exercices de planification deviennent de plus en plus évidentes et se traduisent par un accès limité aux services essentiels, une insécurité physique et économique, une marginalisation et des conflits sociaux. Après avoir examiné les dynamiques migratoires et les défis de l'Afrique du Sud, ce court essai émet cinq recommandations pour améliorer la politique et la gestion des migrations: 1) Revoir

les divisions analytiques et bureaucratiques entre les migrants avec ou sans papiers; entre les migrants volontaires ou forcés, et entre la migration internationale et nationale; 2) réorganiser la spatialisation des scénarios de planification et de gestion sur une base analytique. Tout en reconnaissant le rôle important du gouvernement national, il est nécessaire de renforcer le rôle des gouvernements locaux, de travailler en collaboration avec les districts, les provinces et les organismes nationaux dans l'évaluation, la conception et la mise en œuvre d'une approche de la mobilité humaine. 3) Intégrer la migration et sa gestion dans une réflexion globale sur la gouvernance et le développement. Pour l'instant, peu d'acteurs internationaux (et encore moins le gouvernement sud-africain), ont appliqué les leçons tirées des approches plus larges de gouvernance de la migration. Leur application devrait inclure la « migration mainstreaming » dans tous les aspects de la gouvernance; 4) reconsidérer fondamentalement la façon dont les ressources sont allouées aux municipalités alors que les autorités locales n'ont souvent pas les ressources nécessaires pour gérer les populations qui sont susceptibles d'arriver dans le futur ou celles qui résident temporairement dans leurs municipalités. En outre, les modèles budgétaires actuels permettent rarement d'assurer la coordination translocale nécessaire à l'assistance des populations qui se déplacent à travers les limites municipales ou provinciales; 5) la prise en compte à long terme de la migration au sein des politiques et des systèmes de gouvernance nécessitera l'amélioration des données et de leur intégration dans les processus de planification. Sans capacité de décrire la mobilité humaine et d'évaluer l'impact actuel et potentiel des politiques, les interventions pourraient échouer, matérialisant alors les craintes actuelles des planificateurs concernant les effets de la mobilité humaine sur la prospérité, la sécurité et le développement.

Loren B. Landau, PhD, African Centre for Migration & Society, University of the Witwatersrand, PO Box 76, Wits 2050, South Africa, loren@migration.org.za

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